

**Framework for the Implementation of the  
North Dakota Signed Language Interpreter Licensure Board  
and  
Regulations Governing Interpreter Requirements**

**Implementation of the ND Interpreter Licensure Board.**

The implementation of the North Dakota Licensure Board is essential to ensure that signed language interpreters maintain state licensure in order to work as professional interpreters in the state of North Dakota. The board will consist of three appointed board members representing three entities as follows: North Dakota Association of the Deaf, North Dakota Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and the state government (i.e. Dept. of Human Services, Dept. of Public Instruction, etc). A representative of the North Dakota Association of the Deaf shall be a frequent customer of interpreting services. Representative of the North Dakota Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf shall be a nationally certified interpreter. The term of the board shall be based on staggered 2 years.

Primary responsibilities of the licensure board consist as the followings:

1. Evaluate the qualifications of applicants for licensure and grant licensure to those who qualify annually based on calendar year;
2. Shall maintain, and publish, and make available upon request a registry of all licensed interpreters and their respective levels of qualification;
3. Share information with the licensed interpreters and the community about laws affecting them;
4. Manage and provide mentoring and professional training; and
5. Develop and adopt regulations.

**State Interpreter Licensure**

**State Licensure**

The North Dakota Interpreter Licensure Board shall issue state licensure to a person who:

1. Holds valid Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) certification.
2. Holds Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) certification at level 3.5 or higher.
3. Holds other nationally recognized state or national certification approved by the licensure board.

**Provisional Licensure**

The North Dakota Interpreter Licensure Board shall issue provisional licensure to a person who:

1. Has successfully completed an interpreter training program affiliated with an accredited education institution pursuant to 43-52-03 bullets 10.

2. Is currently a non-certified interpreter as of July 1, 2011 who participates in a board approved plan of up to two years in preparation for national testing including mentoring. During the two-year provisional period, the interpreter must develop and implement a plan in collaboration with a mentor and the Licensure Board. He/she must have taken a national testing before applying for a provisional licensure.
3. Individuals with provisional licensure will be required to interpret under the supervision of licensed interpreters for # of hours to be determined by the licensure board before he/she may interpret solo with an exception of medical, legal and mental health assignments.

### **State Licensure and Registration Fee**

The North Dakota Interpreter Licensure Board shall establish and maintain the following non-refundable fee of 25 dollars for licensure and registration for both certified interpreters and provisional certified interpreters. In order to have their state licensure registered or renewed, the applicant shall produce documentation indicating their national certification is current and valid.

### **Interpreter Mentoring Program**

The North Dakota Interpreter licensure Board shall provide a mentoring program to an individual who holds provisional licensure. The mentor may be either a Deaf or hard of hearing person and/or a nationally certified interpreter. The mentor, in collaboration with the provisionally licensed interpreter, shall develop and implement a monthly plan designed to meet the requirements of 43-52-01 bullet 4, and include at least once a month on-site mentoring process.

#### **Deaf Mentor**

1. Shall be a certified American Sign Language instructor and/or have taught ASL in an educational setting at least three years;
2. Is a native American Sign Language signer familiar with the grammatical structure of the ASL trained and/or approved by the North Dakota Interpreting Licensure Board accordance to their experience and/ or credentials.

#### **Certified Interpreter**

1. Must be an interpreter/transliterater who possesses nationally recognized certification and has at least seven years of interpreting/transliterating experience including at least three years of experience outside the educational setting.

### **North Dakota Interpreter Licensure Program Fund**

Licensing of interpreters and maintaining the mentoring program for the provisional licensed interpreters for the deaf and professional training for interpreters will be funded by the same monthly telephone surcharge that funds the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) and annual state licensure fees received. Any money in the fund is continuously appropriated to the board for expenses incurred in the provisional licensure, registration of interpreters for the deaf, the mentoring program and professional training. The fund may be expended by the secretary of the state department to be determined later.

## **Offenses and Enforcement**

To protect the integrity of the quality interpreting services provided in the state of North Dakota, any individual, agency and/or contractor will be subject to monetary fines when this interpreting law is being disregarded.

Any person who practices without a license in violation of the law is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

## **Goals and Action of Plans for**

### **Current Certified Interpreters**

1. License interpreters who currently hold a certification issued by one of the nationally based professional organizations recognized and approved by the licensure board.

### **Current Non-Certified Interpreters**

1. Must have taken and failed a national certificate test in 2011 before applying for a provisional licensure.
2. The licensure board will issue one-year provisional license, renewable for one more year, upon the board's acceptance and approval of applicant's proposed mentoring plan.
3. Mandatory participation in professional training workshops determined by the licensure board to include Code of Professional Conduct training and other regulation pertaining to interpreting.

## **Expectation of the Non-Certified Interpreters**

1. Before the completion of the provisional licensure has expired after two years the individual shall have obtained national certification.

## **Timeline**

Nov 2010	Submit a bill to the North Dakota Legislature Council
July 2011	Establish North Dakota Interpreter Licensure Board
July 2011	Collaboration with the state government to distribute a letter of notification of this law to all interpreters
Jun to Dec 2011	Develop the mentoring program and train mentors
Jan 1, 2012	Start issuing the state licensure to applicants
July 1, 2013	Penalty clause enacted